

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Zborovsky on October 23, 2009.

The application has been amended as follows:

- a. Claim 12, line 22, the examiner has replaced the limitation "is braced" with --engages--.
- b. Claim 12, line 23, the examiner has replaced the limitation "embodied" with --formed--.
- c. Claim 18, line 23, the examiner has replaced the limitation "is braced" with --engages--.
- d. Claim 18, line 24, the examiner has replaced the limitation "embodied" with --formed--.
- e. Claim 19, line 23, the examiner has replaced the limitation "is braced" with --engages--.
- f. Claim 19, line 24, the examiner has replaced the limitation "embodied" with --formed--.

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g. Claim 20, line 21, the examiner has replaced the limitation “is braced” with
--engages--.

h. Claim 20, line 22, the examiner has replaced the limitation “embodied” with
--formed--.

The following is an examiner’s statement of reasons for allowance: The prior art does not teach a gear mechanism as defined by the claims. It was known in the art to provide a gear with a dampening arrangement (for example, see DE 39 22 552). Further, it was known in the art to form the dampening arrangement as claimed (see either USP 2,961,856 or USP 1,425,616). However, the prior art does not appear to teach the claimed combination of a gear having the claimed dampening arrangement, wherein the gear is held from axial movement in a first direction by engaging a shoulder formed on the shaft and held from axial movement in a second direction by the slaving device. Accordingly, the claims are allowable.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled “Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance.”

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William C. Joyce whose telephone number is (571) 272-7107. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday 7:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richard Ridley can be reached on (571) 272-6917. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/William C. Joyce/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3656